

2652



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on January 5, 2004

Kathy Duffett
Kathy Duffett, Secretary

In the Application of

Ser.No.: 10/018,143

Filed: April 3, 2002

For: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR COATING AN OPTICALLY
READABLE DATA CARRIER

Art Unit: 2652

Examiner: Klimowicz, William Joseph

Commissioner for Patents

Alexandria VA 22313-1450

RECEIVED

JAN 13 2004

Technology Center 2600

AMENDMENT IN RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION DATED 12/03/03

There are no changes to the Claims.

Dear Sir:

In order to be responsive to the outstanding office action requirement, Applicants elect Group 1, claims 37 – 53, with traverse, for prosecution on the merits.

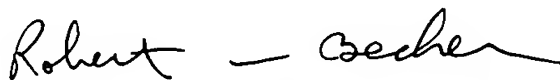
However, as discussed in detail in Applicants' previous amendment dated October 14, 2003, it is respectfully submitted that unity of invention is in fact present. In particular, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims do in fact have the same or corresponding special technical features. This common feature is that a transparent adhesive film that is provided with adhesive on one side is provided, with this film serving for protecting a data carrier surface. The patent rules do not require

that all independent claims be identical, since under such circumstances separate independent claims would not be considered. It is furthermore respectfully submitted that the criterion for consideration of unity of invention is whether or not all of the independent claims relate to a single general inventive concept, not whether all of the claims are identically classified.

Applicants have attempted to be fully responsive to the outstanding office action.

However, should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, or wish to discuss the merits of the application, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call in order to discuss any outstanding issues and to expedite placement of the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully Submitted,



Robert W. Becker, Reg. No. 26,255
for applicant(s)

ROBERT W. BECKER & ASSOCIATES
707 Highway 66 East, Suite B
Tijeras, NM 87059
RWB:kd

Telephone: (505) 286-3511
Facsimile: (505) 286-3524